THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) to (d) Natural calamities do cause damage of varying magnitude to crops, depending on intensity of the calamity. However, there is no evidence to suggest that most of the crops are damaged every year by such calamities. There is built-in mechanism for providing relief to farmers from the Calamity Relief Fund of each State which, according to recommendations of the Eleventh Finance Commission, consists of 75% of the annual allocation contributed by the Centre and the balance 25% contributed by the respective States. As regards calamities of severe nature, additional assistance is considered from the National Calamity Contingency Fund. Also, the items and norms of relief assistance provides for payment of input subsidy to small and marginal farmers for damaged crops.

Quality of processed foods

2744. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken or propose to take any special steps for improving the quality of its processed foods; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI TH. CHAOBA SINGH): (a) and (b) The Agro Food Processing Industries are required to comply with provisions of the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, the Fruit Products Order, the Milk and Milk Products Order, the Meat Food Products Order, the Weights and Measures (Packaged Commodities) Rules, 1977. To ensure that the hygiene and food quality of food products is maintained at appropriate standards, the provisions and stipulations of these Orders and Rules are continuously monitored and amended from time to time, as required. Further, Government has already initiated action to harmonize the domestic standards with International standards.

Tardy earthquake rehabilitation work in Gujarat

2745. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there has been tardy progress in relief/rehabilitation work in the quake-hit areas of Gujarat;